

COMMEMORATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEACE CORPS
SEPTEMBER 22, 2021

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today marks a very important event—the 60th anniversary of the Peace Corps. On September 22, 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed the Peace Corps Act (Public Law 87–293). To date, more than 240,000 Americans have served as Peace Corps volunteers in 142 countries around the world. Prior to the global COVID–19 pandemic, there were nearly 8,000 Peace Corps volunteers serving in 61 countries. Today, Peace Corps volunteers stand ready to return to their crucial work once it is safe and prudent to do so.

Like successive generations of young Americans, my wife Patti and I answered President Kennedy's call and served in the Peace Corps in Ethiopia from 1966 to 1968. As co-chair of the Congressional Peace Corps Caucus, I am proud to continue working in support of the Peace Corps' mission, its volunteers, and the indelible impact their service has on the lives of so many around the world.

And so today we commemorate 60 years of Peace Corps. We celebrate over 240,000 Peace Corps volunteers who have served around the world, and we celebrate those who have worked to fulfill the three goals both during and after their volunteer service: 1) To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women; 2) To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served; and 3) To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

As Peace Corps volunteers have returned to America, they have continued to serve over their lifetimes. They serve as volunteers at twice the rate of other Americans. They are in our nation's schools as educators. They are in community programs as leaders and mentors across the country. And a few are even found in the United States Congress.

Today, there are global leaders of many countries who have been taught by Peace Corps volunteers in their high schools, in their grammar schools, or in their universities. They have a very special understanding of America because of the Peace Corps. They know Americans. They know that Americans have a big heart, and they have a desire to see progress, economic and social progress, in every country of this world.

The benefits of the Peace Corps at home and abroad are undeniable. Congress last reauthorized the Peace Corps in 1999 (Public Law 106–30), which expired at the end of fiscal year 2003. Now more than ever, Congress must support the Peace Corps' mission and realize President Kennedy's vision of generations of young Americans, ready to serve their nation and make the world a better place.

The bipartisan "Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2021" (H.R. 1456), which I introduced earlier this year on National Peace Corps Day (March 1), would do just that by providing additional federal resources to better support current, returning, and former Peace Corps volunteers. This critical legislation will

help the agency and volunteers impacted by the COVID–19 pandemic.

H.R. 1456 builds upon the Sam Farr and Nick Castle Peace Corps Reform Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–256) and the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011 (Public Law 112–57). The bill guarantees additional health insurance coverage for returned volunteers immediately following their service and requires the Peace Corps to better facilitate long-term public and private health insurance coverage options for returned volunteers. The bill also increases the federal workers' compensation rate for all Peace Corps volunteers injured or disabled during their service and strengthens protections of volunteers against reprisals or retaliations for reporting wrongdoing or malfeasance.

President Kennedy understood in 1961 that the Peace Corps would "permit our people to exercise more fully their responsibilities in the great common cause of world development." I can think of no better way to honor the 60 years of Peace Corps service than for this Congress to pass the bipartisan "Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2021" (H.R. 1456) to advance that vision into the 21st century.

To all the current and returned Peace Corps volunteers, I thank them for their commitment to serving others on this, the 60th anniversary. Our work continues.

WEST 38

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize West 38 of Wheat Ridge, Colorado for receiving the City of Wheat Ridge's 17th Annual Reinvestment Award.

The award is given to a Wheat Ridge business that has reinvested significant resources into our community. West 38 is a new apartment complex in the heart of Wheat Ridge that provides market-rate housing to our community. With an impressive 165 units, many residents of Wheat Ridge will be able to call West 38 home for years to come. They also have a wide array of amenities for their tenants. Their beautiful development is a welcome addition to the housing market and our community.

Congratulations to West 38 for their contribution to the Wheat Ridge community and for receiving these awards.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEACE CORPS

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th Anniversary of the Peace Corps Act and the dedicated heroes who work tirelessly to bring a positive change in communities across the world.

President Kennedy signed the Peace Corps Act into law in 1961 and presented the opportunity for American citizens to be innovators

and trailblazers in communities abroad. In the last 60 years, over 240,000 American citizens have humbly worked across the globe with local leaders to meet the needs of the host country's communities.

It makes me proud to know that for more than a decade, California has led the nation in recruiting Peace Corps Volunteers. Since 1961, 31,752 Californians have decided to share their heart, creativity, and ingenuity in over 140 countries. Our nation is thankful for the Peace Corps volunteers who go to their host country to bring a greater understanding of American values. And we can't forget the lessons that volunteers learn during their time abroad, and how their service helps them become more compassionate leaders back home. Peace Corps volunteers don't only serve as ambassadors for the global community but also as role models for a younger generation in the U.S. I hope their passion to serve others continues to transform and inspire our communities.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic temporarily suspending all operations in 2020 and evacuating all 7,000 volunteers across the world, the Peace Corps stands at the ready to once more promote peace and friendship in every corner of the world.

So, I want to take this moment to say thank you, not just to the men and women from California in the Peace Corps, but also to all those who serve and have served proudly with the Peace Corps.

Today, Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the 60th Anniversary of the Peace Corps Act and the men and women who intrepidly go out into the world to bring change and peace through hard work and American values.

TRIBUTE TO U.S. NAVY CORPSMAN MAXTON "MAX" SOVIAK

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to U.S. Navy Corpsman Maxton "Max" Soviak of Berlin Heights, Ohio. Max, always faithful, became one of the 13 heroes from the Navy, Army, and Marine Corps who gave their lives on August 26, 2021 at Kabul Airport in service to our country.

Corpsman Soviak was 22 years old, not even old enough to remember the terror attacks of 9/11 that spurred the war in which he would later be deployed.

And yet, at just 18, Max took it upon himself to answer the Nation's call to preserve and protect the blessings of liberty.

Reflecting upon his life, we bear witness to a young man who was beloved by friends and neighbors in his close-knit hometown of Berlin Heights, Ohio.

He excelled in school, was named to the honor roll, and earned a two-year certificate in electrical technology from the EHOVE Career Center.

He thrived in wrestling, football, Boy Scouts, and the school band.

And he was adored beyond measure by his parents and 12 siblings.

Max embodied the best of our Nation, a man of many passions, who was lively, strong,

independent, and fiercely loyal. Max's talents could have taken him in whatever direction he desired, and he did just that by enlisting in the U.S. Navy.

After graduating from Recruit Training in Illinois, Max was assigned to the 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division out of Camp Pendleton, California.

He would go on to work in the immunization department at the Navy Hospital Guam, where he endeared himself to the locals by becoming a part of the local wrestling and martial arts community.

Max arrived in Afghanistan carrying with him his devotion to serving others, as well as extensive training in emergency medical techniques.

As a Corpsman and leader, Max was known as a "Doc," a specially trained Corpsman who provides both medical care to Marines in the unit, and is also ready and able to engage in combat right alongside them.

Docs are widely respected and possess an unbreakable bond with the Marines alongside whom they serve, owing to their responsibility of keeping the unit alive.

Max's duties extended beyond providing care and comfort to his unit. During his final days at Kabul airport, Max worked around the clock to help evacuate Americans as well as Afghan citizens, including very young children, who faced a dangerous and uncertain future if they remained.

Just before the terrorist attack on the airport, one of Max's final duties was to provide comfort to the children in need. One young boy in particular was brought through Abbey Gate and handed into the arms of Corpsman Soviak to be looked after.

This final act of Corpsman Soviak, providing aid to those going through unprecedented chaos, was a result of his extensive military training. But more than that, it came from who Max Soviak was at his core.

A strong, smart, loving, decent person who made a decision, regardless of the uncertainty or danger he faced, to join the armed forces and serve his nation in her hour of need.

The immensity of Max's loss to his family, friends, community, and our country, is as incalculable as it is heart-breaking.

That a future as bright as his would never come to pass causes a pain that will never truly fade.

But in the face of this unspeakable tragedy, where only darkness and sadness seem to reside, we hope that those who knew him and loved him most may take comfort and pride in the fact that their Max—their brother, son, and friend—did not die in vain.

Max's courage and dedication touched the lives of countless Americans and Afghans, including a young boy who had lost everything.

By standing up and answering the call to protect and defend innocent civilians, Max's actions, and his life helped to ensure that more than 120,000 people were able to reach safety after making their way through the gates where Max was stationed.

The men, women, and children whose names he will never know, but whose lives were assured by his selflessness—will serve as a symbol of his commitment until their final days.

It will never be possible to repay the debt America owes Corpsman Max Soviak or his family. He made the ultimate sacrifice, and his family and a grateful nation will forever mourn

his loss. We will honor his memory, and express our deep, unending gratitude for his willingness to serve America, and provide safety and comfort to strangers in need. Max demonstrated an uncommon heroism. For those who knew him at home in Berlin Heights, his patriotism and valor are exactly what they expected of him.

God bless and hold closely Navy Corpsman Max Soviak.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

SPEECH OF

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of en bloc amendments #2 and #3 which include three of my amendments that will improve transparency in our overseas contingency contracts, make our sanctions regimes more effective, and strengthen our ability to combat illicit financing networks.

My first amendment, #252, reauthorizes the Commission on Wartime Contracting which will engage in vital oversight of our contracting and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq and other areas where we conduct contingency operations.

This Commission has a proven track record of helping us reduce waste and fraud in overseas operations contracting. Indeed, in its prior iteration, from 2008 to 2011, the Commission found between \$31 billion and \$60 billion in U.S. taxpayer funds that were lost due to contract waste, fraud, and abuse in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now that the U.S. has withdrawn from Afghanistan after 20 years, and as we prepare to end our combat mission in Iraq by the end of this year—after 19 years of war—it would be irresponsible not to examine what came of the hundreds of billions in contract dollars spent during these operations.

Amendment #253 comprises the language of two vital bills. The first is the Combating Illicit Finance Through Public-Private Partnerships Act, which would expand the mandate of the interagency supervisory team convened by the Department of the Treasury to examine strategies to improve public-private partnerships to counter illicit finance by including sanctions evasion and other illicit financial activities. The amendment also contains the provisions of the Strengthening Awareness of Sanctions Act, which would establish within the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) a voluntary public-private information sharing partnership among law enforcement agencies, national security agencies, financial institutions, and OFAC, which will allow for a more effective administration and enforcement to better administer and enforce economic and trade sanctions.

This illicit finance amendment will ensure that the sanctions we impose are able to successfully cut off the funding that allow bad actors to continue to carry out terror attacks, traffic in drugs, humans, and weapons, pose threats to the U.S. and our allies, and cause instability around the world.

Finally, amendment #254 directs the President to re-establish the Afghanistan Threat Fi-

nance Cell. This interagency effort would bring together law enforcement, military, and financial intelligence resources to identify, target, disrupt, and dismantle illicit financial networks.

Like the Commission on Wartime Contracting, the Afghanistan Threat Finance Cell has also proven itself as an effective body: not long after its establishment in 2008, it was the first organization to reveal an interdependent web of links between corrupt Afghan officials, criminals, drug traffickers, and insurgents. Thanks to the efforts of the Threat Finance Cell, the Executive Branch took action to pursue broad efforts to address and combat Afghan corruption.

While the Afghanistan Threat Finance Cell ended in 2014, this effort remains just as important, especially now that the U.S. no longer has an in-country military presence. The renewed Cell will serve a critical role in tracking and disrupting the use of threat finance by insurgent groups and other illicit actors, while augmenting the oversight work of regional financial investigative units. Only by eliminating the sources of funding can we effectively take on the terrorists, drug traffickers, and other criminal elements that continue to feed into the corruption and instability in Afghanistan.

Inclusion of these amendments will strengthen congressional oversight and government transparency, as well as bolster the effectiveness of our sanctions, and provide vital tools with which to combat fraud, waste, and corruption.

I would like to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member ROGERS for including these three amendments in the two en bloc amendments. I would urge all Members to support the passage of these en blocs.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 23, 2021 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

SEPTEMBER 28

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the conclusion of military operations in Afghanistan and plans for future counterterrorism operations.

SD-G50